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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 STATE 085128

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/10/2019
TAGS: [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [EG](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE: SEARCH FOR CONSENSUS ON
MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

REF: A. STATE 079781
[1](#)B. UNVIE 0333

Classified By: ISN Vann H. Van Diepen, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request, please see paragraphs 5-8.
Berlin, Dublin, Madrid, please see paragraph 6. UNVIE,
please see paragraph 7. Canberra, Ottawa, Stockholm,
Wellington, please see paragraph 8.

SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (C) For three consecutive years, the annual International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference (GC) has been mired in a highly divisive Arab/Israeli debate on Middle East issues that disrupts the core technical work of the GC and threatens to undermine the utility of the Conference itself. Egyptian-led Arab Group inflexibility on this issue also distracts significantly from the work of the IAEA Board of Governors on priority compliance-related Middle East safeguards issues (particularly international concern over Iran's and Syria's nuclear programs), exacerbating divisions on the Board and impairing its ability to address these issues appropriately in advance of the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

[1](#)3. (C) Washington believes a new approach to Middle East issues at the GC is necessary if the Conference is to move beyond this protracted debate, as the GC currently risks devolving into a political forum on the Middle East out of step with the IAEA's technical mandate. In an effort to overcome this longstanding dispute in Vienna, Department seeks views on constructively moving this issue forward, in particular with respect to the possibility of pursuing a single consensus resolution on the Middle East. Agreement on a single resolution at the General Conference that avoids singling out Israel's nuclear status would establish a positive precedent on these issues and help tamp down a divisive debate that risks poisoning the atmosphere at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

OBJECTIVES

[1](#)4. (C) Posts are requested to pursue the following objectives regarding Middle East issues in advance of the September 2009 IAEA General Conference:

-- Demonstrate USG commitment to achieving an acceptable consensus outcome on Middle East issues and use the IAEA General Conference to advance this effort. Constructive engagement on the Middle East debate (and a general acknowledgement of a good-faith effort on the part of the United States to resolve this issue) is critical to achieving

a favorable outcome on these issues specifically, and a productive General Conference more broadly, as well as to maintain EU unity in firmly opposing divisive Arab Group tactics. EU support remains essential to the success of any approach.

-- Underscore the strategic implications of the GC debate for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

-- Explore options with host governments on new approaches to Middle East issues at the GC, in particular the possibility of pursuing a single consensus resolution on the Middle East.

-- For Berlin, Dublin, and Madrid: Seek host country commitment not to break EU consensus in opposing action on the proposed Arab League resolution on Israeli Nuclear Capabilities.

ACTION REQUEST

15. (C) Posts are requested to draw on the following points in discussing our approach to Middle East issues at the September 2009 IAEA General Conference:

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-- Washington is concerned that Middle East issues will once again overshadow the upcoming annual IAEA General Conference, scheduled for 14-18 September in Vienna.

-- A highly politicized Arab/Israeli debate on Middle East issues at the GC has disrupted the core technical work of the Agency for the past three years. The status quo on these issues is unsustainable and prevents the General Conference from focusing on other pressing IAEA business.

-- This year, the Arab League has again tabled an inappropriate resolution entitled "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities," which unnecessarily singles out Israel while unhelpfully ignoring the serious nonproliferation concerns in the rest of the region, including international concern regarding the nuclear programs in Iran and Syria. We believe that, as in previous years, this resolution is divisive and redundant given the closely related Egyptian-sponsored Middle East Safeguards resolution.

-- Washington believes the old consensus package on the Middle East agenda items that operated prior to 2006 is no longer viable; a new approach is necessary if the General Conference is to return to consensus and overcome the current impasse. We should use the General Conference to re-frame the Middle East debate in ways that can reinforce a positive outcome at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

-- In an effort to return the GC to consensus on this issue, one solution Washington is considering would be a single resolution on the Middle East, combining the consensus portions of the language of the two Middle East resolutions traditionally tabled at the conference, while also acknowledging the differences that have led to the lack of consensus at recent GCs.

-- By combining the most widely acceptable language of the texts, while respectfully acknowledging in the resolution the issues on which there has not been agreement, we hope that a new resolution could be adopted by consensus and avoid the counterproductive debate that has characterized this issue since 2006.

-- We are open to ideas for a single resolution that can be the basis for consensus, and look forward to working with you constructively to promote this with the parties.

-- Avoiding another acrimonious debate at the 2009 General Conference is critical, and every effort should be made to return to a consensus approach on Middle East issues. This is particularly important in advance of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which this unresolved debate threatens to undermine.

-- We would appreciate your thoughts on how to constructively advance the Middle East debate at the GC, in particular the possibility of pursuing a single consensus resolution on the Middle East.

16. (C) Embassies Berlin, Dublin, and Madrid may draw on the following points in addition to those in paragraph five:

-- The United States was disappointed at Egypt's and the Arab League's uncompromising approach at last year's GC, where they once again insisted on bringing the divisive "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities" resolution to the floor.

-- The Israeli Nuclear Capabilities resolution as tabled by the Arab League this year is once again not an appropriate point of departure for a consensus approach to Middle East issues.

-- Washington believes that all Middle East safeguards-related issues would be more effectively handled in a single consensus resolution that addresses all regional concerns, without inappropriately singling out one country to the exclusion of others.

-- We hope the Arab Group will show more flexibility this year and demonstrate a good faith effort toward the goal of achieving a consensus outcome on these issues at the General Conference.

-- We note that Egypt continues to be the lynchpin in bringing about Arab Group consensus.

-- Should the Arab Group not wish to pursue a consensus approach, Washington seeks your support in ensuring that, as in previous years, no action is taken on this divisive

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resolution.

-- With the NPT Review Conference next year, the stakes this year in the GC are higher and it will be critical to demonstrate our resolve to oppose tactics that undermine the credibility of the international nonproliferation regime and distract from the real challenges posed by Iran and others.

17. (C) UNVIE is requested to continue coordinating with likeminded missions and the GC President to promote the idea of a single resolution on the Middle East. Mission may draw on the following suggested points for a single resolution in its discussions with likeminded and the GC President. In coordination with the Israeli Mission, UNVIE may also continue to consider other language it deems appropriate and effective in increasing the chances of achieving a new consensus outcome. The Department greatly appreciates UNVIE's continued efforts in this regard.

-- Would include language respectfully acknowledging the differences of opinion that have led to a lack of consensus in the General Conference since 2006. May note that regaining consensus would be conducive to the work of the Agency in the region, including in undertaking measures called for in this resolution.

-- May be largely borrowed from the 2008 Egyptian Middle East Safeguards Resolution, with the exception of language representing areas of continued and respectful disagreement. May also include language from the first operative paragraph of the Arab League Israeli Nuclear Capabilities Resolution to the effect of "expresses concern about the risk posed by the

proliferation of nuclear weapons to the security and stability of the Middle East."

18. (C) Embassies Canberra, Ottawa, Stockholm, and Wellington may draw on the following points in addition to those found in paragraph four:

-- Washington greatly appreciates your constructive leadership role toward achieving a consensus outcome on Middle East issues at the General Conference and looks forward to continuing our close coordination on this issue.

-- A successful resolution of the dispute will be hard-fought, and will require our significant and sustained efforts coordinated in both Vienna and capitals.

-- The United States is open to your suggestions on how we may best achieve consensus and seeks your continued support as we move forward.

REPORTING DEADLINE AND POCs

19. (SBU) Posts are requested to report substantive responses within 7 days. Jody Daniel (ISN/RA, 202-647-9486) and Richard Nephew (ISN/RA, 202-647-7680) are the Department's POCs for this activity.

CLINTON